

21617 - “Labbayk Allaahumma labbayk” - what does it mean?

the question

“Labbayka Allaahumma labbayk, labbayka laa shareeka laka labbayk. Inna al-hamd wa’l-ni’mata laka wa’l-mulk, laa shareeka lak (Here I am, O Allaah, here I am. Here I am, You have no partner, here I am. Verily all praise and blessings are Yours, and all sovereignty, You have no partner).”

This is the Talbiyah recited by the pilgrim doing Hajj and ‘Umrah. What is its meaning and what is the benefit of it?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allaah.

Hajj is the symbol of Tawheed (the Oneness of Allaah) from the first moment the pilgrim enters ihraam. Jaabir ibn ‘Abd-Allaah said, describing the Hajj of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him): “Then he started to say the words of Tawheed, “Labbayka Allaahumma labbayk, labbayka laa shareeka laka labbayk. Inna al-hamd wa’l-ni’mata laka wa’l-mulk, laa shareeka lak (Here I am, O Allaah, here I am. Here I am, You have no partner, here I am. Verily all praise and blessings are Yours, and all sovereignty, You have no partner).” Narrated by Muslim.

Anas said, describing how the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) entered ihraam, that he said: “Labbayka ‘Umrata laa riyaa’a fiha wa la sum’ah (Here I am for ‘Umrah in which there is no showing off or seeking reputation).”

This trains the soul to acknowledge the Oneness of Allaah and to be sincere towards Him.

The pilgrim starts his Hajj with Tawheed, and continues to recite the Talbiyah with its words of Tawheed, and he moves from one action to the next with Tawheed.

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The Talbiyah has a number of meanings, such as:

1. "Labbayka Allaahumma labbayk (Here I am, O Allaah, here I am)" is one response after another, which is repeated to show that the response is lasting and ongoing.
2. "Labbayka Allaahumma labbayk (Here I am, O Allaah, here I am)" means, I submit and submit again, i.e., ongoing submission.
3. It may mean staying in one place (labba bi'l-makaan) and clinging to it, which means, I am persisting in obeying You, thus emphasizing the meaning of continuous servitude to Allaah.
4. One of the meanings of the Talbiyah is confirming love of Allaah. There is an Arabic phrase imra'ah labbah (a loving woman) which refers to a woman who loves her child. One only says "Labbayk (Here I am at your service)" to a person whom one loves and respects.
5. It implies sincerity, as in the phrase lubb al-shay' which means the essence of a thing, and lubb al-rajul which means a man's mind and heart.
6. It implies drawing close, as in the word ilbaab, which means drawing close, so it emphasizes the meaning of seeking to draw closer and closer to Allaah.
7. It is a symbol of the Tawheed of the religion of Ibraaheem, which is the spirit and aim of Hajj, indeed the spirit and aim of all the acts of worship. Hence the Talbiyah is the key to this act of worship that the pilgrim is embarking on.

The Talbiyah also includes:

Praise of Allaah, which is the dearest thing with which a person may draw close to Allaah.

It implies recognition of the blessings of Allaah, for He is the source of all blessings and the One Who bestows them.

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And it includes acknowledging that all sovereignty belongs to Allaah alone, and no one else has any true dominion.

See Mukhtasar Tahdheeb al-Sunan, by Ibn al-Qayyim, 2/335-339

When the pilgrim is reciting the Talbiyah, he feels a connection with all other created beings, as they all join with him in submission to Allaah alone and echo his Talbiyah. The Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “There is no Muslim who recites the Talbiyah but whatever is to his right and to his left of stones, rocks and clods recites it with him, to the furthest point to the east and the west” - meaning from his right and his left. Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, 828; also by Ibn Khuzaymah and al-Bayhaqi with a saheeh isnaad.